

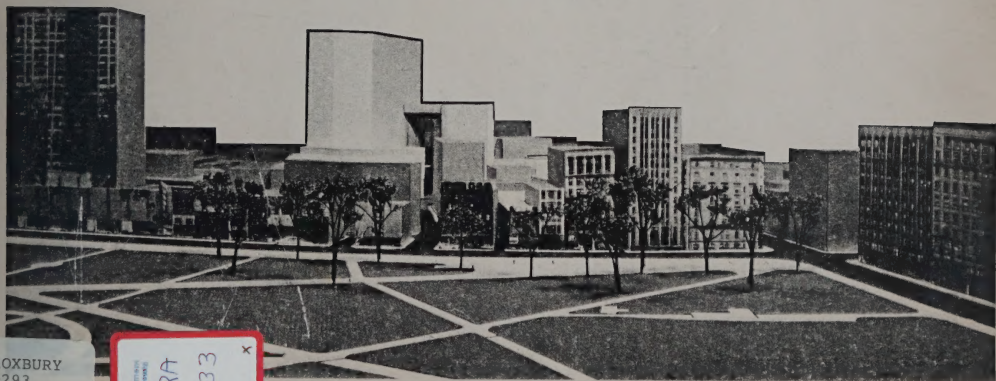
Mr. 48-788

79

# FEDERAL OFFICE COMPLEX

*Development Objectives on Lower Washington Street*

*Prepared for the Boston Redevelopment Authority  
by Lane/Frenchman, Inc.*



ROXBURY  
F293  
1980





## Lane/Frenchman, Inc.

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January 7, 1980

Mr. Robert Ryan, Director  
Boston Redevelopment Authority  
City Hall  
Boston, Massachusetts

Dear Mr. Ryan:

Lane/Frenchman, Inc. is pleased to submit the attached report, which analyzes development opportunities and constraints in the lower Washington Street area. The impetus for this report is the possibility that the General Services Administration may determine that this area is their preferred site for a major new federal office building.

It is our conclusion that the construction of a new federal office complex, if properly planned and designed, can have a dramatic positive effect on this section of Boston by consolidating the success of Downtown Crossing and by diminishing the image of the combat zone. It may also create significant opportunities to provide housing and retail expansion space for the Chinese Community. However, we also believe that a project of this magnitude could have a significantly adverse effect on the area, if it is designed and implemented in the conventional way.

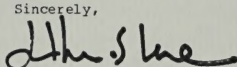
Therefore, this report identifies and illustrates a set of development objectives aimed at maximizing the positive contributions of the federal project to the city. These objectives should be used as a guide by the GSA and BRA in a joint effort to determine the program, character, and precise location of the building. The report is organized into four sections:

- 1 Program -- outline of GSA requirements for a federal office building and definition of the study area;
- 2 Issues -- discussion of key questions relating to the future of lower Washington St., including an identification of specific objectives for the federal project;
- 3 Policy Objectives -- synopsis of objectives for each location in the study area, followed by two development scenarios that illustrate different approaches to the project which meet the policy objectives;
- 4 Appendix -- a summary evaluation of all development options considered in the course of the study.

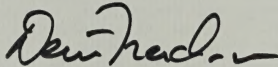
Our aim in this project was to assist your staff in reaching a consensus position on the most appropriate concept of future development if the lower Washington Street site should be selected by GSA. Due to the accelerated time schedule of the project, work to date represents a staff effort which has involved neither community groups nor the General Services Administration. Clearly, such interaction should be an immediate next step, if the GSA pursues the lower Washington Street location.

We thank you and the Boston Redevelopment Authority Board for the opportunity to undertake this assignment.

Sincerely,



Jonathan S. Lane



Dennis Frenchman

DF/wpc

Enclosure.

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# PROGRAM

The General Services Administration has been studying the feasibility of developing a second major federal office building in Boston. The building is intended to provide centralized, efficient, first-class space for over 30 agencies now scattered in many leased locations throughout the city and in the suburbs. For planning purposes, the building has been characterized as a tower of up to 22 stories, with several levels of parking below grade. The total project will contain 960,000 gross sq. ft., providing 638,000 sq. ft. of occupiable area.\* A rough program is as follows:

	<u>net</u>	<u>gross</u>
Agency space	482,000 s.f.	725,000 s.f.
Common services/expansion	34,000	52,000
Multi-use	22,000	33,000
Parking garage (285 cars)	<u>100,000</u>	<u>150,000</u>
	638,000	960,000

The multi-use space is provided to encourage public access and may include community, cultural, educational, or commercial activities.

Although the building has yet to be designed, numerous federal office buildings constructed in urban settings can provide a model for what is likely to be proposed. Most of these buildings consist of a simple, clearly articulated office tower, and a podium or an adjacent lower structure which houses services and multi-use activities. A plaza may be developed to provide a formal setting and to articulate entry. The existing JFK Federal Building at Government Center is an example

\* Additional Environmental Data on the Construction of a New Federal Office Building, General Services Administration, May 31, 1979.





JFK FEDERAL BUILDING

of this formula. GSA comments to date imply that a similar concept may be envisioned for the new office structure.

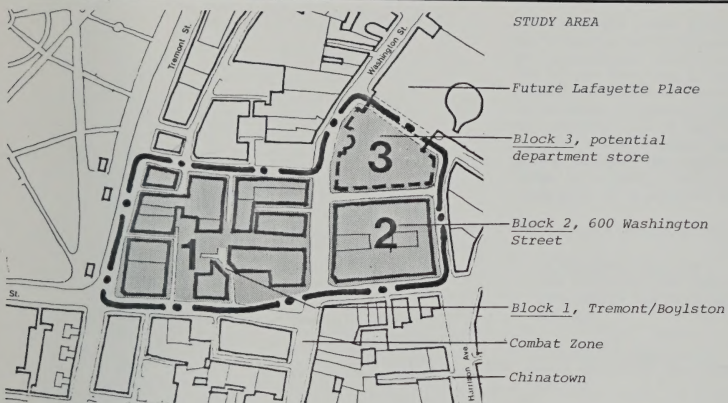
In recent years there have been some notable exceptions to the traditional approach to federal building in response to the Cooperative Use Act of 1976, which encouraged mixed use development. The result has been projects that more carefully relate to the scale and character of their surroundings and encourage general public use and enjoyment of federal facilities. This concept of federal building is essential in Boston. From the beginning, the project should be viewed as an important piece of urban design that will maximize benefits to its neighbors, as well as to federal agencies.

At this time, GSA has narrowed its selection of a site for the building to one of three blocks within the central business district. This study focuses on two of these sites:

- o Tremont/Boylston (GSA site K) -- A block which fronts on the Public Garden and is bounded by Washington, Essex, Tremont and Avery Streets. Included is a diversity of building types and uses: offices, a Masonic Temple, hotel, retail space, and two theatres. Although within the Adult Entertainment Zone, only two properties actually house this use.
- o 600 Washington St. (GSA site A) -- This block is occupied by a single building, originally constructed as a department store. It now houses a variety of activities including retail, office, light manufacturing, and a twin movie theatre. Until recently, the Chinese community had considered purchasing 600 Washington St. to provide spaces for housing and retail expansion.

We have labelled these two sites Blocks 1 and 2. The study area addressed in this report also includes a third block, immediately north of 600 Washington and adjacent to the proposed Lafayette Place retail center. Block 3 was recently cleared. A major department store has expressed some interest in the site, but may be awaiting a decision by the GSA to build in the area before proceeding with its plans. The GSA's decision is crucial, since its presence could reduce the image of the combat zone and increase the desirability of Block 3 as a retail location. The study area for this project was defined to include the entire area of Blocks 1, 2 and 3, to include the potential site for the federal office building, as well as retail, housing, and entertainment uses. Our aim was to see if a comprehensive approach to planning development could resolve the many issues now facing the future of lower Washington St.





600 WASHINGTON STREET



# THE ISSUES

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The following pages explore the key issues raised by the potential redevelopment of lower Washington Street. The issues were identified by analyzing previous studies of the area; by taking into account prevailing community attitudes as revealed in the history of other development proposals; and by an exhaustive analysis of the implications of possible design configurations that the GSA building could take within the study area. (The design analysis is presented in the Appendix.) Each issue is briefly discussed, followed by a specific statement of objectives for the federal project.

The issues considered are:

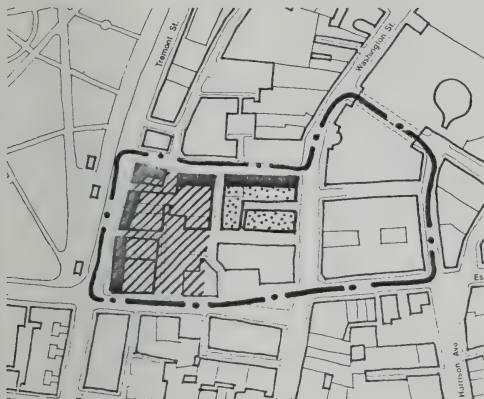
- o Development Pattern -- Of what value are the existing buildings and spaces in lower Washington St. and how should new development respect this existing fabric?
- o Siting and Visibility -- What are the most acceptable locations for major, visually prominent structures?
- o Access -- How should pedestrians and vehicles approach and gain access to the project? Are street closings, changes in traffic circulation, and pedestrian improvements appropriate?
- o Housing -- Where and how should this critical need be met within the study area?
- o Retail -- Can the project enhance retail development along Washington St., while still providing an imageable federal office building?
- o Entertainment -- How can the project reinforce the city's efforts to revitalize the theatre district?

The existing physical structure of lower Washington Street evolved over time to produce a diverse collection of small and large buildings of a variety of styles. Although few of the individual structures are of great historical significance, as a group they are typical of the fabric of old Boston, and provide a context for more significant historical areas to the north and south. The two blocks on either side of Washington Street straddle the original neck of land which linked the center of Boston to neighborhoods to the south. In recognition of this role, numerous agencies and individual experts have proposed that buildings on Block 1 be placed on the National Register of Historic Places. At this point in time, it appears a virtual certainty that a large portion of the block will be included in a future National Register district. Buildings which have been identified as being of particular significance include: an integral group of 10-14 story buildings that form a strong visual edge to the Common at Tremont/Boylston corner; and a group of mid-19th century buildings clustered about the Astor Theatre. Also of significance are those buildings which form the Tremont and Avery streetscapes since together they retain a continuous edge of traditional fabric.




To date, redevelopment in the area has been concentrated to the east of Washington Street, where a series of large, single use, one block buildings have been, or are about to be constructed. The effect of such design will be to change drastically, and forever the unique urban character of this section of Boston.

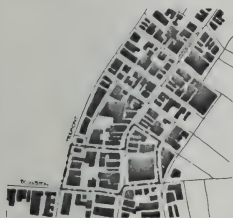
## *Development Objectives*

- o Preserve existing structures within potential National Register district.
- o Retain existing structures on Tremont and Avery Streets.
- o Avoid the development of a single form on one block by breaking up and distributing the mass of large new buildings.

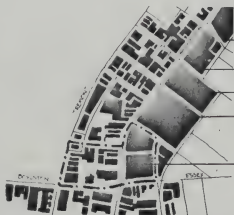


#### HISTORIC AREAS

-  Potential National Register District
-  Other significant buildings
-  Tremont and Avery streetscapes



c. 1960



c. 1985

#### DEVELOPMENT TRENDS

- Woolworths
- Filenes
- Jordan Marsh
- Lafayette Place
- 600 Washington Street

THE OLD FABRIC, along Tremont Street



## *Siting and Visibility*

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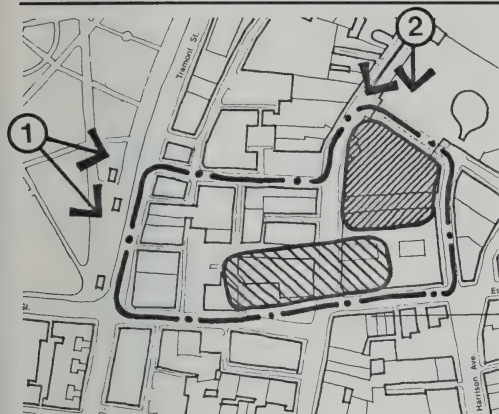
The study area is immediately adjacent to the Boston Common and straddles Washington Street -- two of the most imageable and unique features of the Hub. The prominence of this area is one reason why it has the potential to be an excellent location for a federal building. This location also implies the need for sensitive design and placement of new construction to avoid negative impacts.

Avoidance of shadows on the Common is, of course, an overriding consideration. The City has established a height restriction of 155 feet for structures within 100 feet of the Common. This does not imply that a building of any height is acceptable beyond this limit. Public debate over the nearby Park Plaza project has established an informal consensus that new structures in the vicinity of the Common should be limited to 30 stories. This approximates the average height of existing towers in the area. Although not an official city policy, adherence to this guideline should avoid controversy.


Along Washington Street, recent pedestrian improvements have re-emphasized the importance of this area as Boston's downtown retail core. Located at one end of the district, the federal complex can provide a strong visual terminus for the area. Adjacent to Washington, the traditional 6-8 story cornice line should be respected, by setting back towers, where possible. In general, sensitivity to the scale and character of surrounding buildings will enhance the quality and acceptability of the project.


## *Development Objectives*

- o Place the highest new structures furthest from the Common.
- o Locate the highest buildings to the northern position of the project area to provide a visual terminus for the downtown retail core.
- o Reduce height to the south to provide a transition into Chinatown and smaller scale historic structures.
- o Design new development to avoid overshadowing adjacent historic structures.



# APPROPRIATE LOCATIONS FOR TOWERS

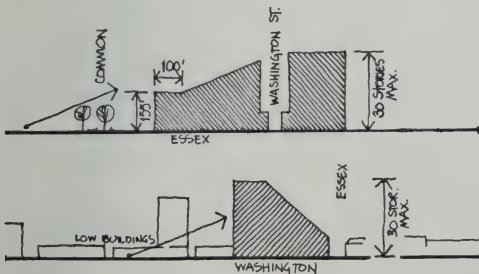
 High  
(20-30 stories)

 Intermediate  
(10-20 stories)

1 View from Boston Common

2 View From Washington Street

Small scale historic structures



## DESIRABLE HEIGHTS

East/West (section at Essex Street)

North/South (section at Washington Street)





## Access

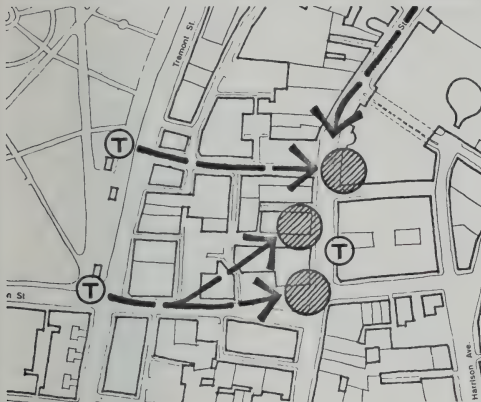
The study area is well served by public transportation. The Orange Line Essex station can be entered from either side of Washington Street and the Green Line Boylston station is located at the corner of the Common. Major pedestrian movement to the complex could occur either down Avery Street to an entrance on Washington Street or via Essex to an entry in the Liberty Corner area. The Essex route might also provide access to an entry court on the interior of Block 1. A third entry route, at some point mid-block on Tremont Street is possible but less desirable, since it would require removal of one or more significant structures.

A primary pedestrian access route will be via Washington Street, from the north. Currently a portion of the street has been converted to pedestrian use and renamed "Downtown Crossing" in the vicinity of Filenes and Jordan Marsh. As additional retail development is constructed, current plans call for these improvements to be extended south to West Street.




To enhance the setting for a federal building as well as the proposed site for a third major department store, we urge that pedestrian improvements be extended south of West Street and that Washington Street be closed to traffic between Avery Street and Essex. This is a logical terminus for "Downtown Crossing" which will enhance the Liberty Square area and provide a transition into Chinatown. Traffic circulation may continue on Avery, Washington, and West Streets to maintain westerly flow and provide access to Lafayette Place. Under this scheme, vehicular service to the federal building would best be provided along Harrison Avenue in the vicinity of proposed entrances to Lafayette Place and a future third department store.

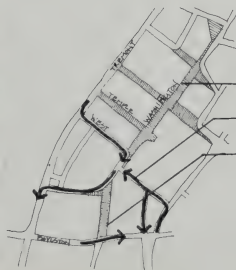
## Development Objectives

- o Orient major pedestrian entry to the federal building off Washington Street.
- o Maintain direct access to and visibility from the Boylston subway stop.
- o Design the project so that vehicular and pedestrian access is efficient with or without the closing of Washington Street.
- o Design public access improvements -- pedestrian and vehicular -- to clarify and reinforce the major entry point of the Federal complex.






# PEDESTRIAN ROUTES

-  Subway entrances
-  Desirable routes
-  Potential entry points to the federal complex



# EXTENSION OF "DOWNTOWN CROSSING"

-  Pedestrian improvements
-  Maintain auto access
-  Close Washington between Avery and Essex

## *Housing*

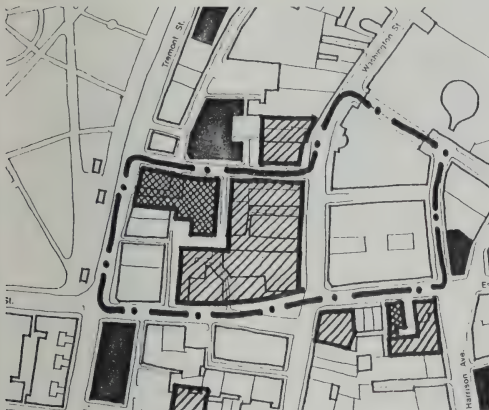
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Over recent years, the city and private developers have shown increasing interest in developing housing within the study area. Housing is a desirable use because it provides a local market for retail and entertainment activities within buildings that are architecturally compatible with the existing small scale fabric. Several private and publicly sponsored projects have been completed in the vicinity of the study area; others are proposed.




In general, these developments are aimed at one of two markets: (1) the luxury market, in the area of the Common, taking advantage of spectacular views and a primary location for shopping, services and employment within the Hub; and (2) subsidized housing for the elderly and the Chinese community. Tremendous overcrowding of existing units in Chinatown has created a desperate need for additional units in the area.

### *Development Objectives*

- o Maintain the potential to develop housing (via reuse or new construction) within the project area. The most desirable locations are indicated to the right.
- o Implement the federal project in a manner that will create opportunities to develop housing for the Chinese community. This objective is of the highest priority.



## HOUSING PROJECTS


-  Existing
-  Proposed
-  Potential



HOTEL TOURAINE, Tremont Street, recently converted to condominiums



## APPROPRIATE HOUSING LOCATIONS

-  Reserve for housing
- 1 Related to Boston Common
- 2 Chinatown expansion

## *Retail*

A major renaissance of Washington Street is now underway, including the successful completion of the first phase of "Downtown Crossing" pedestrian improvements, the construction of Lafayette Place, and the possible future development of a third major department store on Block 3. The federal building will, to a large degree, improve the perceived quality of the area by creating a buffer between the retail core and the combat zone, thereby encouraging further development and improvement along Washington Street.

Although new retail growth is extremely desirable, it has carried with it some unfortunate consequences with respect to the scale and character of the street. Modern retailing practice encourages large floor areas with as few levels as possible. This has, and will continue to result in predominantly three store structures to the East of Washington Street. This is clearly incompatible with the 6-8 story structures on the West side of the street.

Additional retail space will soon be constructed within the State Transportation Building in Park Plaza. This can be viewed as part of a gradual eastward expansion of Boston's Boylston Street retail spine. At the same time, retail, restaurant, and service activities of the Chinese community are expanding outward from their traditional center on Beech Street. Within recent months, Chinese community interests have purchased or expressed interest in several buildings along Essex Street for future commercial use. Also, the city has adopted an official policy of encouraging the expansion of Chinatown into the lower Washington Street area as one strategy to displace the combat zone. Clearly, the study area lies at the intersection of these three development forces. The design of the project can help to resolve the forces by serving to define turf while encouraging pedestrians to move among the three retail areas.

## *Development Objectives*

- o Continue ground floor retail uses along Washington Street.
- o Provide space for commercial development oriented to the Chinese community along Essex Street, especially east of Washington.
- o Encourage development of federal office space over low rise retail to maintain the scale of the streetscape and the existing mix of uses.



#### RETAIL GROWTH



Extend retail uses  
down Washington St.



Reserve space for  
expansion of Chinese  
community retail,  
restaurant, and  
service activities



EXISTING RETAIL, lower  
Washington Street, Block 1

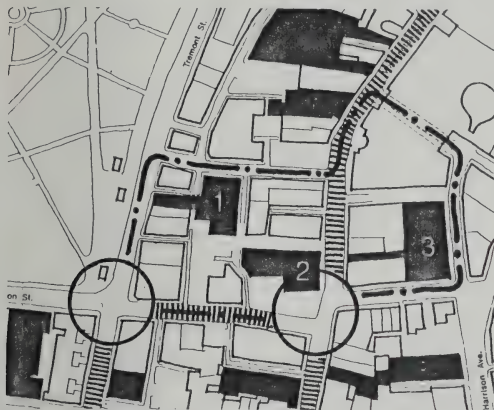
The City has made a major public commitment to revitalize its Theatre district. A recent study by Benjamin Thompson and Associates proposed the development of two major entertainment activity nodes at corners which bound the study area. The study area connects the now reviving upper Washington Street theatres (Modern, Savoy, Paramount) with the combat zone and legitimate theatres on Stuart Street. Of the three theatres contained within the study area, only the Astor (one of the oldest theatres in Boston) retains much of its 19th century character. The State and the Star have been drastically altered.

The overwhelming characteristic of the district is its mix of uses and activities, which give a sense of life to the area. While the city certainly wishes to decrease pornography in the combat zone, the finely grained diversity of uses found there and throughout the theatre district should be preserved.

## *Development Objectives*

- o Retain a mix of uses and activities on each block within the project area.
- o Provide pedestrian amenities at places which will encourage use by legitimate theatre goers.
- o Encourage federal action which will support restoration of the Astor Theatre, perhaps by joint use as a federal auditorium.





## ENTERTAINMENT DISTRICT

Existing Theaters

- 1 Astor
- 2 State
- 3 Star

Entertainment Streets

Proposed entertainment corners



ASTOR THEATRE  
Entrance on  
Tremont Street



# POLICY OBJECTIVES

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Our analysis of the issues, plus numerous design studies included in the Appendix of this Report, lead to the conclusion that the proposed federal office building can be a positive asset to the Lower Washington area, provided that it is not designed in isolation. We recommend that the entire three block area be the focus of a joint programming and planning effort by the General Services Administration and the Boston Redevelopment Authority. In this context the project can provide a vehicle not only to consolidate federal office requirements, but also to resolve many problems and issues facing this area of the city. The conventional federal office project which results in a single mass placing predominantly office use on one block would be a detriment to the area and should be avoided at all cost.

## Location Options

Within the preferred sites identified above, three locational options for new federal office buildings are possible:

- o place the entire federal complex west of Washington Street
- o place a portion of the federal complex on each side of Washington Street
- o place the entire federal complex east of Washington Street

To illustrate the implications of the policy objectives on the potential design of a federal office complex and its relationship to the area fabric, two "scenarios" are presented. These two scenarios best fulfilled the objectives, based on the evaluation of design options presented in the Appendix. Scenario #1 illustrates the option of placing all new building east of Washington to provide a final terminus of total redevelopment of this area. Scenario #2 splits development to either side of the street. Although both options could be developed using existing street patterns, optional approaches suggest how the potential of each scheme could be maximized with a proposal to close lower Washington Street between Avery and Essex.

The other locational option, all development west of Washington, was also carefully considered within the context of the study. After numerous design proposals for this concept, it was concluded that maximization of the above objectives was least possible with the west of Washington approach, although clearly possible from a strictly architectural standpoint. Numerous studies for the west of Washington option have been included in the Appendix, along with different approaches considered for the other two locational options.

Development objectives for each location within the study area are as follows:



- 1 Preserve existing buildings;
- 2 Encourage housing use, or joint use of buildings for federal purposes;



- 3 Allow expansion of major retail south on Washington St.;



- 4 Maintain continuity within the theatre district in terms of form and bulk of building, mix of old and new uses, and the diversity of activities within each block.



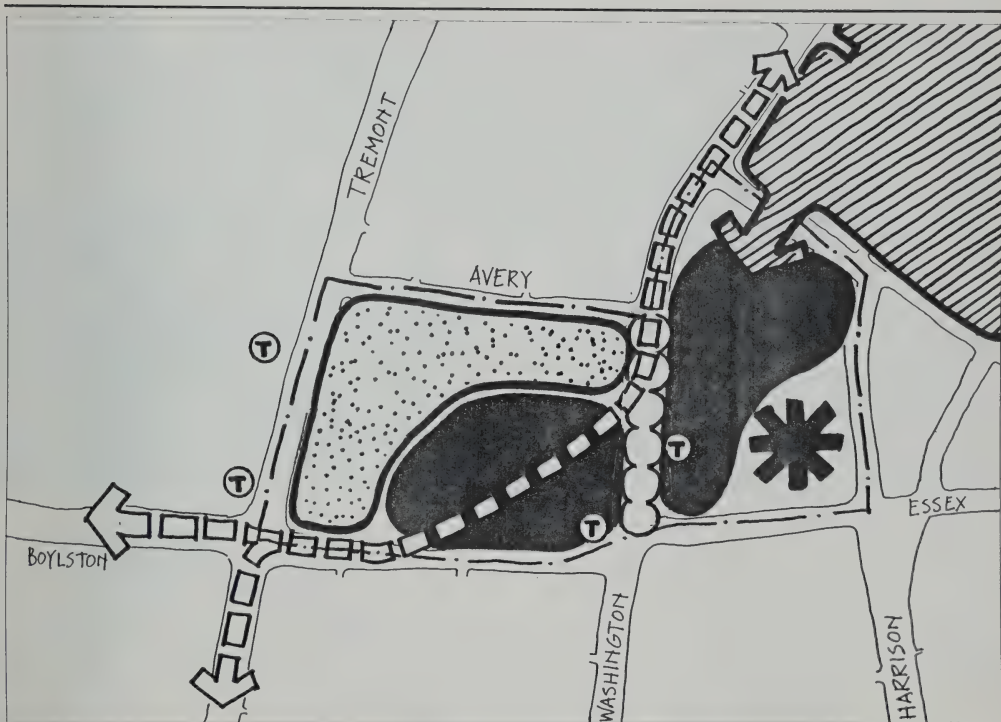
- 5 Provide housing expansion space for the Chinese community, retaining the potential for commercial uses on the ground floor;



- 6 Preferred sites for the GSA office structure are those which will maximize the objectives above. Implications of these objectives include: (1) moderate height to the south and west; creation of special entertainment related public space, (2) maximum height to the north and east of the study area; potential use of air rights over retail;



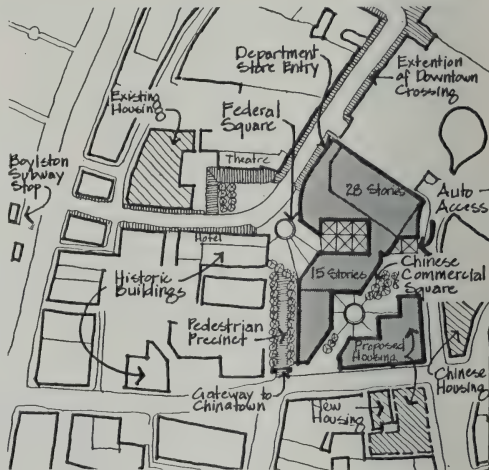
- 7 Special treatment of Washington Street to provide terminus to Downtown Crossing retail/pedestrian district, provide a setting for federal office building, and serve as a gateway and transition to Chinatown; primary entrance to the complex via Washington St.



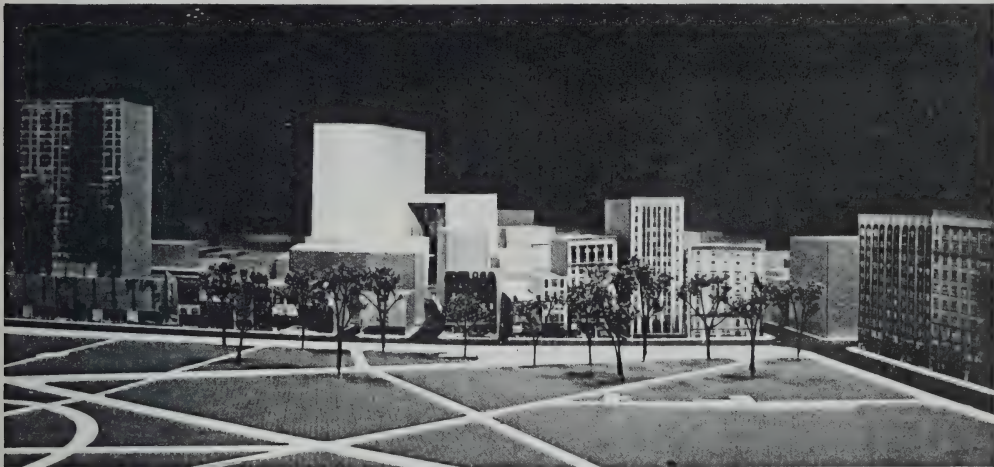
# Scenario 1

This option continues a trend of placing new development east of Washington Street by siting the entire federal project on Blocks 2 and 3. 600 Washington Street -- an early one block, one use building -- is removed to provide space for the federal office complex and a new housing and commercial center for the Chinese community. On Block 3, the first three floors are developed for cooperative use by a major department store. Activities are carefully zoned and the design articulated to enhance the requirements of each separate use:

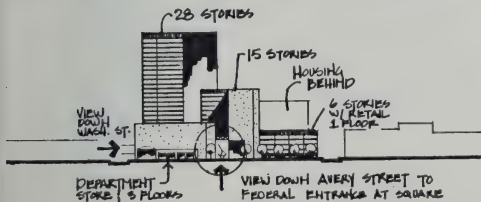
- o Federal office -- Most office uses are placed in two adjoining towers of different heights, with a third much lower structure containing agencies which require public contact. A grand, highly imageable entry court is provided on axis with Avery Street. The through-block court would be oriented to pedestrian use on the west from Avery St., with an auto (and service) entrance to the east. Joint federal-agency service activities requiring large floor areas, such as cafeterias, are housed in five stories above the department store, opening to the entry court. Parking is provided on two stories below grade.
- o Retail -- The majority of ground floor space on the two blocks is given over to retail use, of two distinctly different kinds. To the north, a major department store serves as a second anchor for the Lafayette Place development, providing the final link in downtown redevelopment. To the south, commercial activities are oriented to the Chinese community, providing a one story court of retail, service, and restaurant expansion space for Chinese businesses. The federal complex, then, provides a transition between two different types of retail activity while maintaining its own, distinct identity.



- o Housing -- A combination of low and mid rise housing occupies the southeastern portion of the site. This project is immediately adjacent to recently renovated units on Harrison Avenue and across from a soon to be developed project on Essex. Housing and related retail activities at this location will anchor the creation of an important new Chinese residential district.



VIEW FROM THE COMMON,  
showing federal building  
with entrance on axis with  
Avery Street



ELEVATION ON WASHINGTON  
STREET



## Setting

Although this scheme could be constructed within the existing pattern of streets and blocks, we recommend that the city consider closing Washington Street to traffic between Avery and Essex. This would improve the setting for the federal building as well as the use and quality of the entire district. As explained previously, the aim of this closing would be to extend the "Downtown Crossing" pedestrian improvements to a logical terminus at the federal building. The center section of Washington may remain open to accommodate west-erly traffic flow.

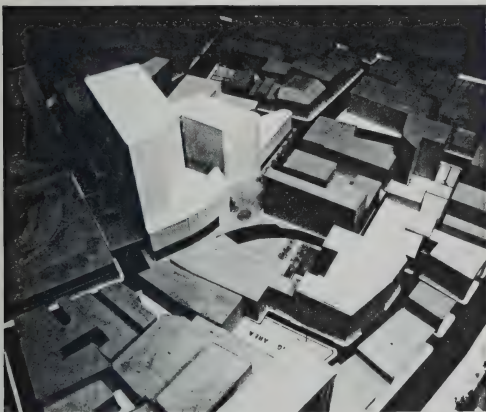
We propose that the existing parking lot at the corner of Avery and Washington also be incorporated into the scheme to create Thomas P. O'Neill, Jr. Square. This square, although modest by Government Center proportions, would offer a wonderful mix of housing, retail and entertainment uses, appropriately focused on the federal building itself. The square would also provide a gracious setting for the national register district, the Paramount Theatre, and a recently completed elderly housing project, all of which focus on the space. Because these surrounding structures are rather tall, they, in conjunction with the federal building, would create a strong visual image at the terminus of Downtown Crossing — echoing the space at School Street, which marks the northern terminus of the district. The remainder of Washington Street, between the Square and Essex, would serve as a pedestrian transition space into what hopefully will become an expanded Chinatown along the remainder of lower Washington Street. We recommend the development of a "Gateway to Chinatown" theme for the Liberty Square area. Recent purchase of the Boylston building by the Chinese Development Corporation represents a strong bid to expand the Chinese neighborhood and the first real step in implementing

the city's goal of eliminating the combat zone. The closing of Washington Street at this junction would encourage linkages between Chinese commercial activity and the downtown retail core.

## Impact

Scenario #1 would minimize potential negative impacts on the existing fabric by keeping new development to the east of Washington Street. This, de facto, preserves the structures in Block 1, while eliminating any public question of adverse impact on the Common. At the same time, the project would serve to enhance the streetscape east of Washington in three significant ways:

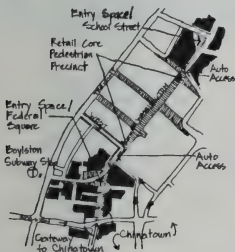
- o It would maintain the traditional 6-8 story character of commercial buildings by placing five floors of office space above the department store.
- o It would remove only one building, the existing single block structure at 600 Washington, and replace it with a mix of forms and activities which reinforce the predominant character of the area.
- o It would distribute the bulk of the federal building in a manner compatible with ground floor and surrounding uses. As illustrated, the greatest mass is placed over the department store in a 22 story tower (total 28 stories, including podium) which can be seen as a symbol from a distance, but is subordinated to the department store up close. An intermediate tower of 15 stories, which would be the tallest vertical mass directly on Washington Street, provides an unmistakable image as the main entrance to the federal complex. Lastly, the structure steps down to a low of six stories on the corner of Boylston and Essex, matching the height of surrounding buildings and compatible with adjacent housing.



VIEW FROM THE NORTHEAST,  
showing federal building,  
entrance, and square;  
department store on ground  
floor



VIEW FROM THE SOUTH,  
showing lower portions of  
federal building and pro-  
posed Chinese community  
housing

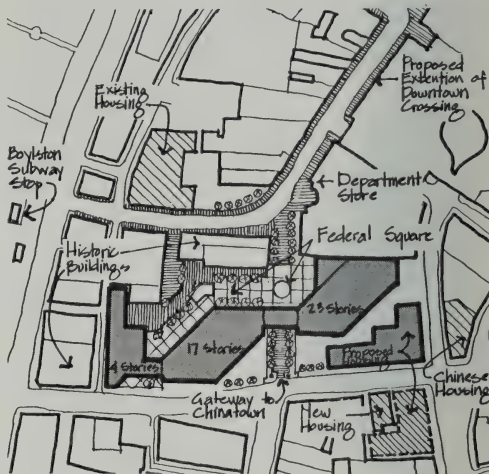


EXTENSION OF "DOWNTOWN  
CROSSING" to  
Thomas P. O'Neill Jr.  
Square

## Scenario 2

This option splits the mass of the federal building into two towers located on Block 1, to the east, and Block 2, to the west. Such a configuration would allow for the independent development of a major department store on Block 3. As in Scenario 1, the existing building at 600 Washington Street is removed to provide space for the eastern tower and the development of housing and commercial space oriented to the Chinese community. The western tower occupies the current site of several structures of lesser significance on Block 1. Uses accommodated within the study area are as follows:

- o Federal Office -- The twin towers provide a powerful visual landmark at lower Washington Street, clearly denoting a federal presence in the area. Although access would be possible from either side of Washington Street, the western tower, set within a mid-block plaza, is clearly visible as the main entrance. A connecting bridge across Washington Street affords access to either side of the project. Parking is provided on two stories below the western site.
- o Retail -- One floor of retail space is provided beneath each tower, occupying the majority of ground floor area. In the western tower, the retail fronts on Essex Street. To the east, commercial space would orient to and provide service for adjacent housing. It is anticipated that the majority of this commercial space would be utilized by Chinese businesses. By locating all federal office entrances to the north and orienting ground floor retail uses to the south, the complex will provide, within itself, a transition between "Downtown Crossing" and the Chinatown community.
- o Housing -- As with Scenario 1, a combination of low and mid-rise housing occupies the southeastern portion of Block 2. One disadvantage of this scenario



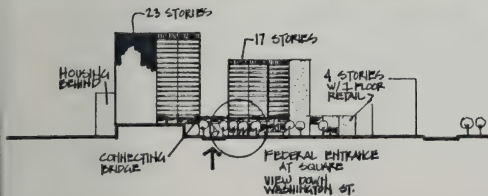
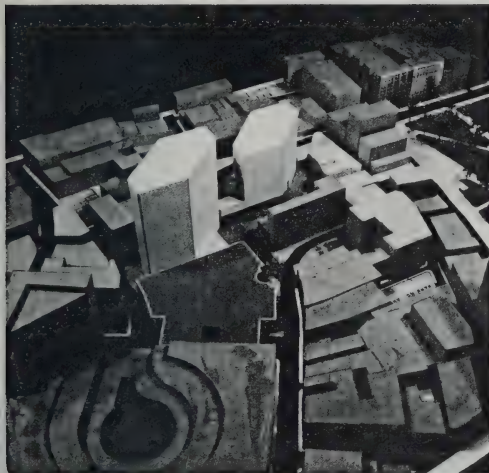
is that it provides less space for this development and greater visual encroachment. Nevertheless, the provision of ground floor commercial within the tower, plus the close proximity of existing and proposed housing will allow the development of an acceptable residential environment providing badly needed facilities for the Chinese community. If the option of utilizing air-rights over the department store on Block 3 (or redefining the southern boundary of the department store site), were incorporated into this scheme, additional space for housing on Block 2 could be made available.

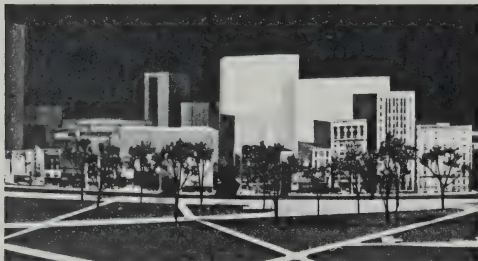
### Setting

As with Scenario 1, this scheme would lend itself to the closing of Washington Street between Avery and Essex. In this instance, however, we would not recommend the creation of a plaza at the Avery Street corner, but rather, the development of extensive mid block improvements on Block 1, to create an appropriate setting for the western tower. This would include not only ground surface improvements and landscaping, but renovation of potential National Register district buildings and the design of new entrances and activities which orient to the center of the block. Included might be shops, restaurants, and a new entrance to the Astor Theatre. The option of connecting the Astor Theatre into the federal complex for reuse as an auditorium is an important potential of this scheme. The aim of the mid-block plaza approach is to create the node of activity and excitement envisioned for this area in the Theatre District study.

### Impact

This proposal fulfills all of the urban design objectives identified previously, but there are significant differences between it and Scenario 1. To avoid construction utilizing air rights on Block 3, this scenario requires the demolition of four structures on Block 1, in addition to 600 Washington St. A majority of the historic fabric is maintained, however, by limiting construction to the southeastern corner of the block. A significant advantage of this scenario is: if an agreement can be reached now that federal development will occur on both sides of Washington Street, maximum flexibility and influence over the future of the area will be maintained. Should the project be confined entirely to the East of Washington, as illustrated in





Scenario 1, there will be little hope of public influence over the future of Block 1 and its historic properties.

By constructing the project within two towers, its overall bulk and height is reduced to twenty-two stories, eliminating the potential of negative impacts on the Common. This compares to a total height of 28 stories for Scenario 1. At the same time, a powerful visual identity for the federal complex is maintained by the opposition of two towers -- the tallest elements on Washington Street -- and the bridge which connects them. The towers are positioned so that only a small portion of each actually touches the street face. In addition to proving a strong image for the buildings themselves, this configuration establishes an appropriately scaled terminus to the "Downtown Crossing" retail area, while providing a literal and symbolic gateway to Chinatown. The power of this symbol is reinforced by the fact that all ground floor activity on the north face of the structures relates to the federal offices, while the southern side provides commercial space and housing for the Chinese community.



VIEW FROM THE COMMON  
(upper left)

AIR VIEW FROM THE COMMON  
(above), showing midblock  
plaza

# APPENDIX

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This appendix describes and evaluates a variety of design concepts for the federal building. During the course of the study, a total of 15 different configurations were developed, illustrating numerous ways of executing each of the three given locational concepts: (1) placing all of the federal building west of Washington St., (2) utilizing sites on both sides, or (3) confining development to the east of Washington Street. Options involving reuse of existing structures for federal purposes were considered, as well as new construction. The characteristics of selected schemes are summarized below and illustrated on the following pages.





In general, this approach was found to have the least potential of meeting the policy objectives described in Section 3. Placing the entire mass of a new building on Block 1, within recommended height limitations, would threaten the potential National Register district and other historic properties. Preservation of existing buildings is possible if they are incorporated within the federal complex and reused for agency purposes. However, even if such a scheme were undertaken, it would offer little opportunity for the development of housing, resulting primarily in office use on the entire block.

- o 1a: Base Scheme -- a new, 24 story tower placed at the center of Block 1, with an entry plaza orienting to Tremont St. and the Boston Common. This option preserves only the Masonic Temple. It would result in a prominent building that offers few benefits to the community.
- o 1b: Doughnut -- a ten story building placed at the perimeter of Block 1, defining a major mid-block office and retail plaza space. The scheme also preserves only the Masonic Temple, but results in a structure potentially more sympathetic to the scale and character of the area.

- o 1c: "L" Scheme -- new construction is developed along Essex and Washington Streets, allowing the preservation and federal reuse of selected structures along Tremont and Avery Streets. This scheme is a sensitive combination of preservation and new development which respects the character of the area, while providing a Tremont St. entry and identity to the complex.
- o 1d: Fabric as Building -- most structures on Block 1 are preserved and reused to house federal agencies. New construction connects the now separate buildings, providing central access and an identity to the complex. This concept would most strengthen the existing physical fabric of the area, but poses some knotty architectural problems.



## Both Sides of Washington



By reducing the mass on Block 1, this concept allows preservation of the potential National Register district as well as a significant reduction in the overall height of the complex. However, the necessity of bridging Washington St. creates the potential for ambiguity with respect to entry and orientation of the complex.

- o 2a: Keep 600 Washington -- 600 Washington St. is reused for federal offices, with required additional space developed in new buildings on Blocks 1 and 3. This scheme is responsive to the character of the area, but the incorporation of 600 Washington St. within the federal complex precludes opportunities to develop housing for the Chinese community.
- o 2b: Twin Towers (Scenario #2) -- clearance of Block 2 and development of identical towers straddling Washington Street. The towers are configured and located to allow preservation of historic properties and to create an appropriate site for housing oriented to the Chinese community. This scheme provides a striking visual identity for the federal complex, but entry could be ambiguous.
- o 2c: Modified Twin Towers -- construction of the eastern tower partially on air rights over the department store on Block 3, providing a larger site for Chinese community housing. A lower structure connects the towers and serves as a main entry, reducing ambiguity.

## East of Washington



These options place the bulk of the federal building over the department store, while retaining a separate, and imageable federal entry. By concentrating retail and office uses, a rather generous site for housing can be provided on Block 2. Potential negative impact on the potential National Register district and on the Common are precluded.

- o 3a: Tower and Podium -- almost the entire mass of federal offices is placed over the department store in a single form. Although a rather generous housing site is provided in Block 2, it is overshadowed by an unacceptably tall, 36 story structure.
- o 3b: Articulated Towers (Scenario #1) -- the mass of the federal building is broken up and distributed among two towers and lower structures. The building is configured to provide a major, imageable entrance to the federal complex as well as a comfortable housing and retail expansion site for the Chinese community. This scheme offers significant urban design advantages, integrating all required uses in a form that respects the character of its surroundings.
- o 3c: Stepped Tower and Podium -- a rather large podium covers the majority of Blocks 1 and 2, topped by an L-shaped tower which is stepped to reduce its apparent mass. Housing is placed partially on the office podium and partially within the remaining space on Block 2.

# Evaluation

The matrix below evaluates each of the above options with respect to the policy objectives. More detailed illustrations of each option are contained on the following pages.

DEVELOPMENT ALTERNATIVES		ISSUES AND OBJECTIVES										DEVELOPMENT PATTERN	SITING AND VISIBILITY	ACCESS	HOUSING	RETAIL	ENTERTAINMENT
		Preserve potential historic district	Retain structures on Tremont/Avory	Break up and distribute mass	Highest structures far from Common	Lower height to north of study area	Major overshadowing historic buildings	Access and visibility from subway	Compatible with closing Washington St.	Clear definition of Federal entry	Housing potential in desired locations	Expansion of retail along Chinese housing	Office space over major retail	Diversity of uses and activities	Pedestrian amenities for theatre goers	Potential for Astor reuse	
EAST OF WASHINGTON	1a Base Scheme																
	1b Doughnut																
	1c "L" Scheme																
	1d Fabric as Building																
BOTH SIDES OF WASHINGTON	2a Keep 600 Washington																
	2b Twin Towers																
	2c Modified																
WEST OF WASHINGTON	3a Tower and Podium																
	3b Articulated Towers																
	3c Stepped Tower/Podium																

KEY

○ Fully Meets Objective

● Partially Meets Objective (or could be achieved with a minimum change in design)

\* NOTE: Evaluations apply only to the Preliminary Options illustrated in the Appendix. Scenarios represent further development of options so as to achieve maximum conformance to objectives.

## KEY

- ☐ Fully Meets Objective
- ☒ Partially Meets Objective (or could be achieved with a minimum change in design)

\* NOTE: Evaluations apply only to the Preliminary Options illustrated in the Appendix. Scenarios represent further development of options so as to achieve maximum conformance to objectives.





# Preliminary Options - 1A

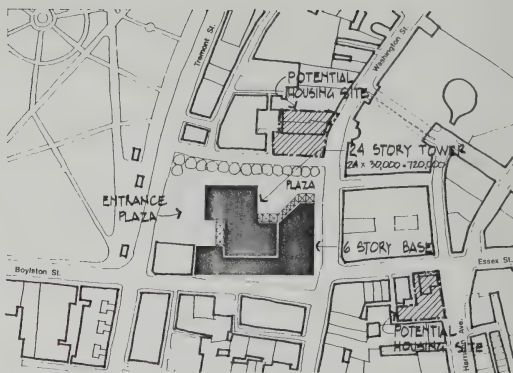
## CONCEPT

24 STORY TOWER, PLACED IN MIDDLE OF SITE & ORIENTED TO BOSTON COMMON / TREMONT ST.  
FEATURES INCLUDE:

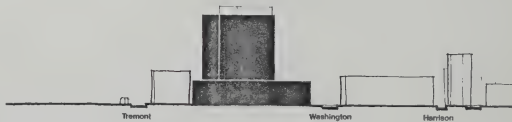
- MAJOR ENTRANCE PLAZA ON TREMONT ST.
- CLEARING OF SITE WITH EXCEPTION OF MASONIC BUILDING
- 6 STORY BASE PROVIDES GROUND FLOOR RETAIL ON WASHINGTON ST. & DIMINISHES SCALE OF TOWER
- AVERY ST. PROVIDES LINK TO MAJOR RETAIL / WASHINGTON ST. SHOPPING

## PROGRAM

860,000  $\text{sq ft}$  NEW CONSTRUCTION  
100,000  $\text{sq ft}$  PARKING, UNDER



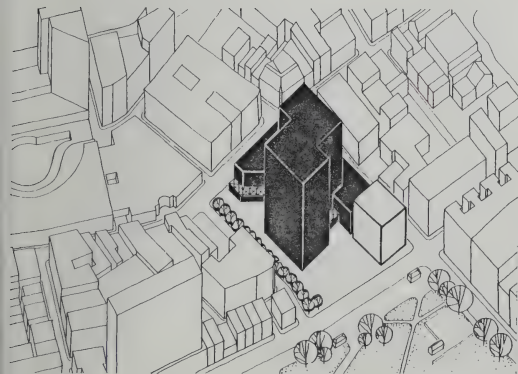
Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common





# Preliminary Options - 1B

**CONCEPT** 10 STORY BUILDING PLACED AT PERIMETER OF BLOCK WITH CENTER DEVELOPED AS RETAIL AND OFFICE PLAZA. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- DEMOLITION OF ALL EXISTING STRUCTURES EXCEPT MASONIC TEMPLE
- RETAIL LINK THRU SITE FROM LAFAYETTE PLACE TOWARDS STATE TRANSPORTATION COMPLEX
- MAJOR EXPOSURE AND ENTRANCE TO GSA BUILDING FROM TREMONT ST.

**PROGRAM** 860,000 SF NEW CONSTRUCTION  
100,000 SF PARKING, 1 LEVEL BELOW GRADE

10 STORY BLOCK  
DEFINES STREET  
EDGE, ALL SIDES  
(80000 x 10 = 800000)

MAJOR ENTRY  
THRU TO COURT

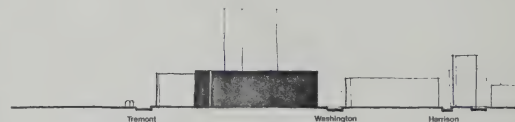
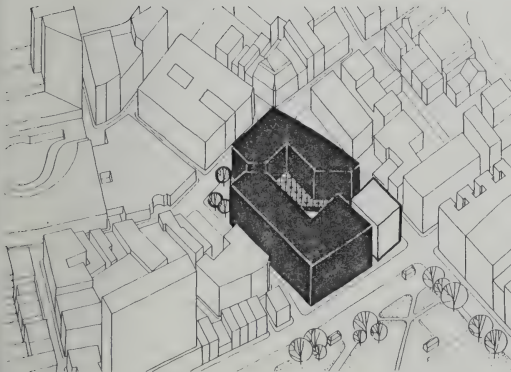
POTENTIAL  
HOUSING SITE

MAJOR ENTRY  
GROUND LEVEL  
RETAIL

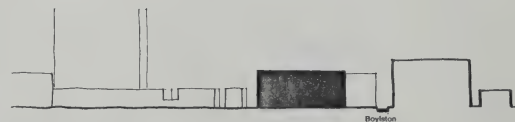
1 LEVEL OF  
PARKING UNDER  
NEW CONSTRUCTION



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common





# Preliminary Options · 1C

## CONCEPT

REUSE ASTOR THEATRE & SELECTED TREMONT ST. BUILDINGS; CREATING ENTRY COURTS TO NEW "L" AT REAR OF PARCEL. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- TREMONT ST. BUILDINGS SUBTEND VIEW OF 20 STORY OFFICE BLOCK AT REAR
- NEW BUILDING STEPS UP FROM HEIGHT OF MASONIC TEMPLE
- MID-BLOCK OPEN SPACE COULD RELATE TO EXISTING, FUTURE HOUSING SITES
- POSSIBLE LINK DIAGONALLY THRU BLOCK
- NEW HOUSING ON ADJACENT PARCELS

## PROGRAM

735,000 sf	NEW CONSTRUCTION
125,000 sf	REUSE EXISTING BLDGS.
100,000 sf	PARKING, 2-LEVEL BELOW GRADE

POTENTIAL HOUSING SITE

REUSE THEATRE BLOCK CORNER

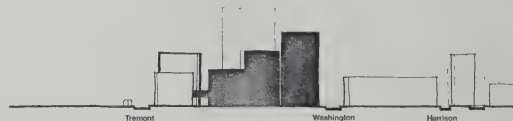
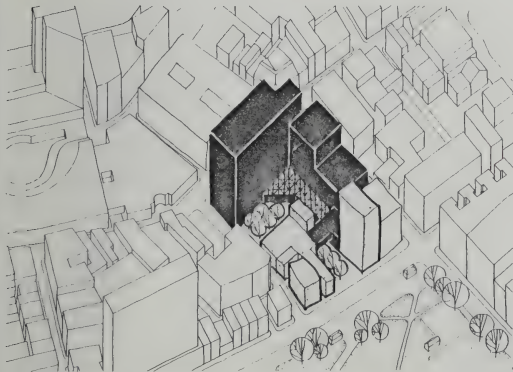
ENTRY COURT  
EDISON BUILD'G  
STEPPED (10-15) BLOCK

20 STORY OFFICE BLOCK

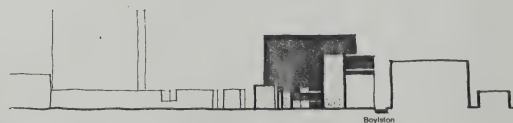
2 LEVEL PKG. UNDER

POTENTIAL HOUSING SITE

Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common



# Preliminary Options · 1D

## CONCEPT

PRESERVE EXISTING FABRIC TO GREATEST EXTENT POSSIBLE BY REUSE OF EXISTING BUILDINGS FOR INDIVIDUAL AGENCIES. NEW CONSTRUCTION PROVIDES CONNECTION, ADDITIONAL OFFICE, CENTRAL SERVICES. FEATURES INCLUDE:

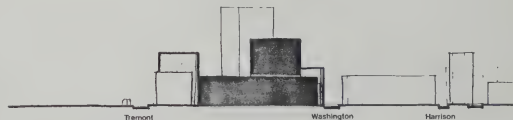
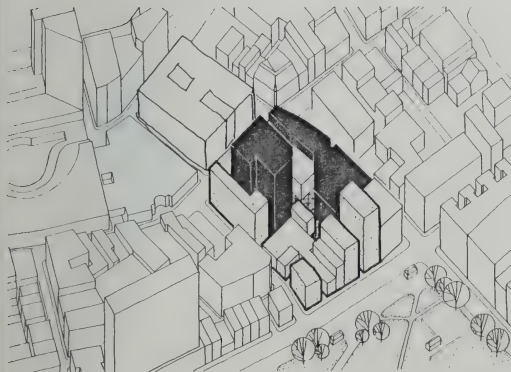
- NEW CONSTRUCTION AT SIMILAR SCALE TO EXISTING
- CENTRAL ACCESS TO ALL BUILDINGS, INDIVIDUAL ACCESS AS REQUIRED
- HIGH POTENTIAL FOR GROUND FLOOR RETAIL IN EXISTING AND NEW SPACES
- NEW HOUSING ON ADJACENT PARCELS

## PROGRAM

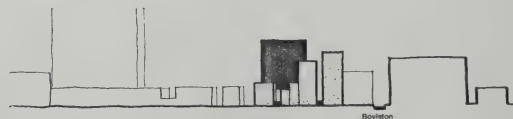
546,000 sf NEW CONSTRUCTION  
314,000 sf REUSE, EXISTING BUILDINGS  
100,000 sf PARKING, 2 LEVELS BELOW



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common



# Preliminary Options · 2A

## CONCEPT

REUSE 600 WASHINGTON ST. FOR GSA WITH ADDITIONAL SPACE DEVELOPED ON ADJACENT SITES. DEVELOP NORTH SIDE OF BLOCK K FOR HOUSING. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- MID-BLOCK PLAZA AS SETTING FOR HOUSING AND OFFICE
- MAJOR PUBLIC INTERIOR SPACE/ENTRY BETWEEN 600 WASHINGTON AND TOWER
- OFFICE CONNECTION ACROSS WASHINGTON ST.
- REMOVAL OF ASTOR THEATRE TO MAKE WAY FOR HOUSING DEVELOPMENT

## PROGRAM

560000 sf NEW CONSTRUCTION  
300000 sf REUSE  
100000 sf PARKING, 2 LEVELS BELOW GRADE

150 UNITS HOUSING -  
REUSE OF EXISTING  
PLUS ADDITION  
TO AVERY HOTEL

8 STORY BLOCK  
(35000 x 8 = 280000)

(18600 x 15 = 280000)  
15 STORY TOWER  
OVER 3 STORIES  
RETAIL

800000

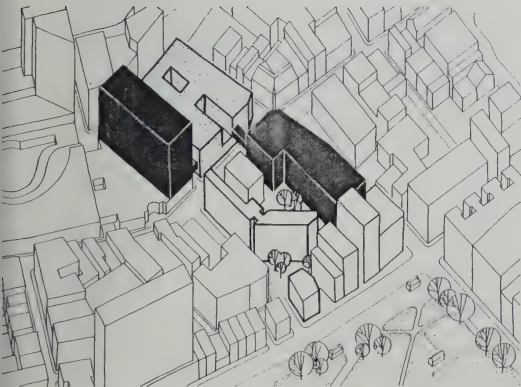
Boylston St

2 LEVELS PARKING  
BELOW GRADE

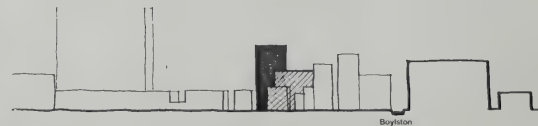
Essex St

Harrison Ave

Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common

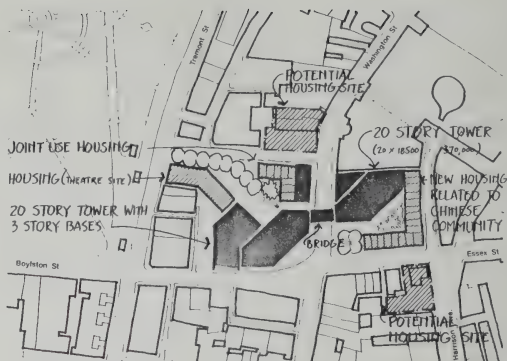


# Preliminary Options · 2B

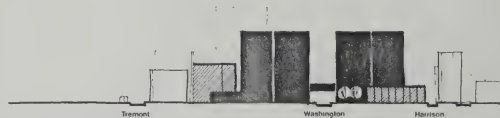
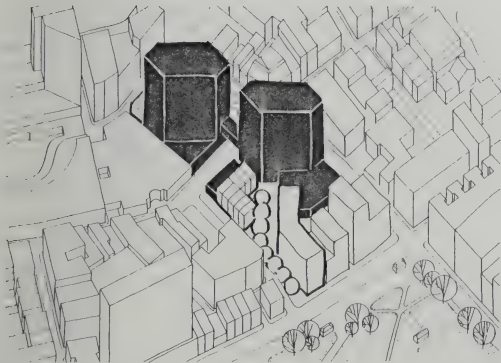
**CONCEPT** TWIN 20 STORY TOWERS ON BOTH SIDES OF WASHINGTON ST, WITH ADJACENT HOUSING. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- NO REUSE
- NEW HOUSING AT BOTH ENDS OF STUDY AREA NEAR CHINESE COMMUNITY & BOSTON COMMON
- HOUSING RELATES TO OTHER PROPOSED HOUSING SITES
- BRIDGE OVER WASHINGTON ST.

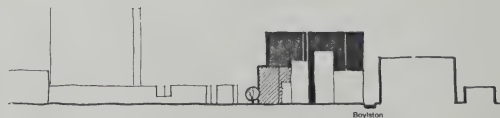
**PROGRAM** 860,000 sf NEW CONSTRUCTION  
 0 sf REUSE  
 100,000 sf PARKING  
 100 - 200 units HOUSING, DEPENDING ON DESIGN



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common





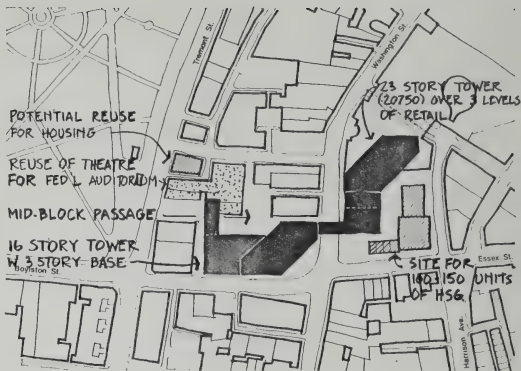
# Preliminary Options - 2C

**CONCEPT:** TOWERS OF 16 & 23 STORIES E & W OF WASHINGTON ST., SITED TO MAXIMIZE PRESERVATION & HOUSING DEV'P ON ADJACENT SITES. FEATURES INCLUDE:

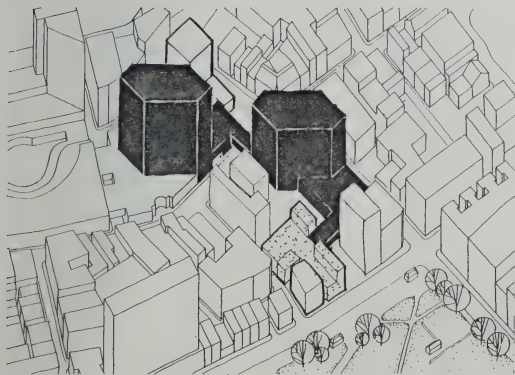
- CONNECTING BLDG AS SINGLE ENTRY, OVER ①
- REUSE OF THEATRE COMPLEX FOR FED'L AUDITORIUM
- MID-BLOCK PASSAGE FROM TREMONT ST.
- USE OF AIR RIGHTS OVER NEW RETAIL FOR E. TOWER
- AMPLE ROOM FOR 100-150 UNITS OF CHINESE COMMUNITY HOUSING AT SE CORNER OF 600 WASHINGTON ST. PARCEL

**PROGRAM:**

835000	sf	NEW CONSTRUCTION
25000	sf	REUSE
100000	sf	PARKING (POSSIBLY 'SPLIT' ON 1 LEVEL ONLY)



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common



# Preliminary Options · 3A

## CONCEPT

PLACE GSA OVER MAJOR RETAIL UTILIZING AIR RIGHTS TO GAIN REQUIRED SITE AREA. REMOVE 600 WASHINGTON TO PROVIDE ADDITIONAL OFFICE AND HOUSING. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- RESIDENTIAL DEVELOPMENT ALONG BOYLSTON ST.
- MAJOR PLAZA, ENTRY OFF WASHINGTON FOR GSA BUILDING
- BASE INCLUDING 3 STORIES RETAIL, 3 STORIES OFFICE; 30 STORY GSA BUILDING ABOVE

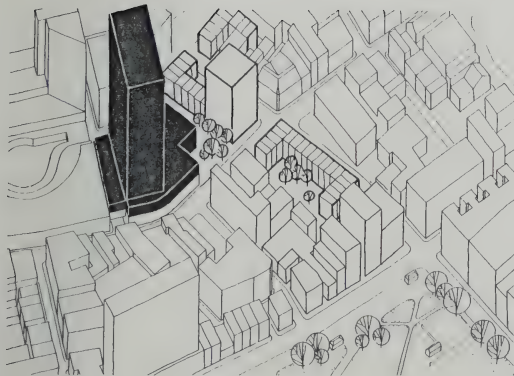
## PROGRAM

860000 sf NEW CONSTRUCTION  
100000 sf PARKING ~ 2 LEVELS BELOW

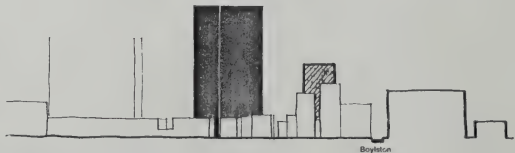
30 STORY TOWER,  
6 STORY BASE  
(30 x 23000 = 690,000)



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common



# Preliminary Options · 3B

**CONCEPT:** PLACE GSA PARTIALLY OVER MAJOR RETAIL ON AIR RIGHTS AND PARTIALLY ON 600 WASHINGTON SITE. REMOVE PRESENT 600 WASHINGTON ST. BUILDING TO PROVIDE FOR NEW OFFICE AND HOUSING. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- FEDERAL OFFICE BUILDING MASS BROKEN UP TO REDUCE APPARENT BULK
- MAJOR, HIGHLY VISIBLE FEDERAL ENTRY DEVELOPED OPPOSITE AVERY ST @ SUBWAY
- CREATION OF RETAIL COURT ORIENTED TO CHINESE COMMUNITY AT INTERIOR OF 600 WASHINGTON BLOCK

**PROGRAM:** 860,000 SF NEW CONSTRUCTION  
100,000 SF PARKING, UNDER

17 STORY TOWER ON 8 STORY BASE

(TOWER - 17 x 25,000 = 59,000)  
(BASE - 5 OFFICE FL x 45,000 = 225,000)

MAJOR FEDERAL ENTRY

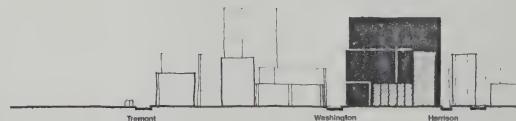
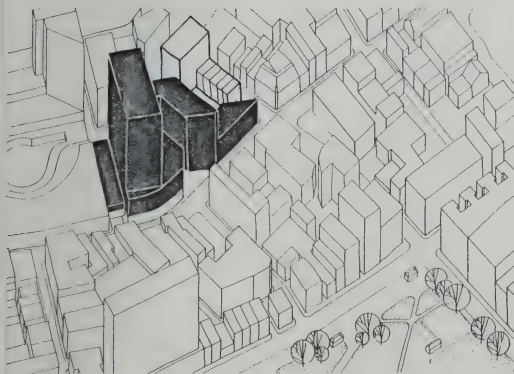
6 STORY BLDG WITH GROUND FL RETAIL  $\square$   
(6 x 10,000 = 60,000)  
Boylston St

15 STORY TOWER  
(15 x 25,000 = 375,000)

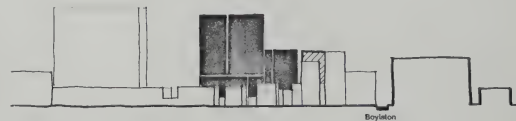
1502 UNITS HSG. WITH GROUND FLOOR RETAIL

PARKING UNDER

Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common



# Preliminary Options · 3C

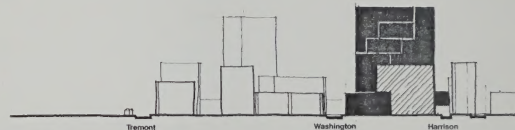
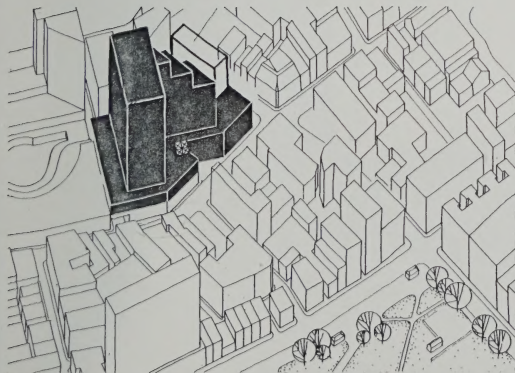
CONCEPT: PLACE STEPPED TOWER PARTIALLY OVER MAJOR RETAIL ON AIR RIGHTS AND PARTIALLY ON 600 WASHINGTON SITE. FEATURES INCLUDE:

- INCORPORATION OF MAJOR RETAIL WITHIN 6 STORY BASE STRUCTURE
- INTEGRATION OF HOUSING WITH 6 STORY BASE
- DEVELOPMENT OF MAJOR FEDERAL ENTRY OFF WASHINGTON ST
- REMOVAL OF EXISTING 600 WASHINGTON ST BUILDING

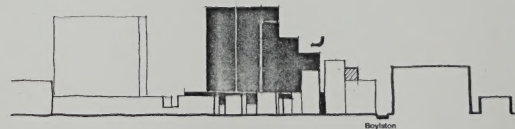
PROGRAM: 860000 SF NEW CONSTRUCTION  
100000 SF PARKING BELOW.



Concept Plan



Site Cross-Section



View from Boston Common

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3 9999 06316 343 8



ROXBURY  
F293  
1980

AUTHOR

FEDERAL OFFICE COMPLEX

TITLE

DATE  
LOANED

BORROWER'S NAME

